

CONSERVATION CROPPING SEQUENCE (328)

Definition - An adapted sequence of crops designed to provide adequate organic residue for maintenance or improvement of soil tilth.

Purpose - To improve or maintain good physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the soil; help reduce erosion; improve water use efficiency and water quality; improve wildlife habitat; or break reproduction cycles of plant pests.

Conditions where practice applies - On all cropland or other lands where agricultural crops are grown.

Planning considerations

1. Rotations of crops produce higher yields of each crop than does continuous single cropping.
2. Herbicides used must have residual periods short enough to permit the planned rotations.
3. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) should be the methods used to control insects and disease.

Specifications

- I. The Conservation Cropping Sequence planned and supported by additional conservation practice should have the potential to limit the average annual erosion rate to acceptable levels.
- II. Where erosion is not the limiting problem, the Conservation Cropping Sequence supported as needed by additional conservation practices, will limit the rating value for soil condition to 0.00 or a (+) positive value. The rating values will be arrived at by use of the Soil Condition Indices.
- III. Fertilize will be planned for optimum yields. Soil test recommendations should be followed. In the absence of a soil test information refer to UT Publication Number 381 Fertilizer Recommendation for Tennessee.
- IV. Lime as suggested by soil test recommendations. Legumes in the cropping sequence should have ample lime applied.
- V. Weed control will be planned using herbicides or cultivation, or a combination. Herbicides, when used, will be applied according to label restrictions. For standards and specifications for no-till cropping refer to Conservation Tillage (478) in Section IV, FOTG.
- VI. The planned crops or crop rotations should correspond to those crops shown in the Soil Crop Suitability Tables found in Section II, FOTG.